



September 19, 1999

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Dear Ted,

There have been developments that you will want to know about, which will form the substance of this letter.

I called \_\_\_\_\_ (returning her call) on Friday night. She has just returned from Wales. (She can tell you all about that.) The reason she called seemed to be specific: John Zerzan had received a call from *Talk Magazine*. She wanted to know why. I told her much that I didn't have to (and probably should not have given her track record in the realm of discretion) and of course she got some of it garbled. Theresa and I are very different, as I am sure you have noticed. One of the things that distinguish us from each other is focus. I tend to stay focused; she doesn't. She also has a tendency to use generalizations, which I try to avoid.

This latter tendency resulted most recently in her making a false statement to \_\_\_\_\_ who of course ran it by me. Immediately, the possibility that there was some transmission-loss occurs to me, and I am willing to suspend judgment. Here is what \_\_\_\_\_ asked (after making me swear that I would not go back to \_\_\_\_\_ for an explanation): she asked if I knowingly allowed you to be interviewed by someone I did not trust (i.e., Dubner).

I can only guess what \_\_\_\_\_ said. I know what I said to *her*. I said that I did not entirely trust Talk (a metonymy in this case for its Editrix Tina Brown), but that my distrust was general and applied to all media. I then mentioned the first excerpt proposal that I turned down, pointing to it as an instance of untrustworthy behavior suspected and possibly averted. I also said that *the media* were not intrinsically evil, and that it is my opinion that given its prime motivation (profit) one can use the media to one's advantage. I specifically said: "The media is a gun. It all depends on who's holding it and what kind of ammunition they are using."

I never said that I distrusted Dubner, but rather expressed that there are ways in which he *might* not be fully trustworthy. In this I meant the obvious: He is not trustworthy when it comes to telling the truth about you to the mainstream media, since he is a contributor to it (as you will read a little later on, he is very trustworthy, for what it's worth). This was only meant to signify that Dubner is not comparable to you, John Zerzan, Derrick, or herself. I then went on to say that

the people I compared him to (which included her) were not entirely trustworthy either – the point being that *no one* is ever entirely trustworthy because people are always unpredictable and you never know when some form of conditioned behavior will surface.

The bottom line: " reported something garbled to " fine. I just don't like to sort this stuff out when I am in the middle of my eighth consecutive 100-hour work week. There are more important things that require my attention.

Here's something that I consider more important. The next morning<sup>\*</sup> I went to the office and parked outside the front door, staking it out for the arrival of the mail lady (funny homonym). Anyway, I was staking it out because I needed your letter with the changes to complete the final page-proofs of *Truth versus Lies*. I was enjoying the feeling of being on this stake out. (I had to wait because the woman who delivers on Saturday does not have a key to the front door, and if I wanted my mail I would have to let her in.) The mail arrived (no letter). I went upstairs to my office to call the proofreaders, the copyeditor, and the compositor, who were all lying in wait for your letter's arrival (more about them later).<sup>\*\*</sup> There was an urgent-sounding message from Steven Dubner.

Dubner's message was alarming. He pulled his piece from *Talk* and wanted<sup>me</sup> to call him immediately. Apparently, Tina Brown got the jitters in the eleventh hour and demanded that the piece be re-written to make you seem less sympathetic. *This* explains why they wanted the excerpts. Stephen refused and told them that the deal was off, they would not be allowed to use any of the information that he had gathered, including the interview. They were offering Dubner a lot of money and also browbeating him, yet he would not change his position. I was alarmed, but as I said to you on the phone – we will have to wait and see what they *do*. Thank the skies above that we will never have to see this. I now think that Dubner can be considered more trustworthy than before. The same caveats as usual apply. But it seems clear that the article must be in some sense sympathetic to your side of the story. Otherwise no such demands as the one I report would have been made.

He has since (it is Sunday) shown his article to the editor of the *New York Times Magazine*, and the editor (his old boss) has said that he will publish the article "as is". He said that your picture will not be on the cover, since they do not want to appear too "pro-TJK" (s.o.s.) but I take this to be a favorable development. The magazine in question is more creditable since it is attached to a news organization. It also reaches somewhere between two and three million more readers. The final decision will be made on Tuesday or Wednesday, and you can rest assured I will let you know of any developments as they make themselves evident to me.

I have to get back to work now. was very happy to receive your kind regards and sends hers back. Hurricane Floyd was a fraud, a pusillanimous pussyfooter.

PS: All of the above is a secret for the time being.

*Finding,*  
*Blair.*

\* That is the a.m. after the conversation with "

\*\* Next letter: they all were very excited by the book.